

Crosscurrents: Neoclassical Drawings and Prints from
the Cooper-Hewitt Museum.

February 19 - April 27, 1980

Focusing on designs for architecture, interior
decoration, the decorative arts, and theatre,

Crosscurrents: Neoclassical Drawings and Prints from
the Cooper-Hewitt Museum is one of the first major

traveling exhibitions of prints and drawings to be

assembled by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum since ~~its~~ ^{becoming}


~~affiliation as~~ the Smithsonian Institution's National
Museum of Design in 1976.

The 135 rare French and Italian prints and drawings
were selected from the Cooper-Hewitt's collection of
nearly 20,000 graphic works related to architecture and
design. Through the examination of pieces from the
period 1750 through 1825, the exhibition demonstrates,
as the title Crosscurrents implies, the lively exchange
of ideas and the vitality of the arts in this period of
intense political ferment and revolution in Europe.

The eighteenth century French drawings in the exhibition reflect the eighteenth century French tradition which held that design drawings should stand as ~~living~~ artistic expressions on their own with carefully balanced compositions heightened by airy colors and attention to detail.

The Italian drawings in the exhibition provide the diversity of an overview of artistic developments in Italy from the late eighteenth century to the Napoleonic era.

More than fifty artists are represented in the exhibition including the great recorder of classical Rome and innovator, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, and his French counterpart, J.L. Legeay. Mario Asprucci's design for Ickworth House in England, and examples visionary urban planning by Giuseppe Barberi are shown along with a large drawing by Charles De Wailly for the pulpit of Saint-Sulpice in Paris and a design with rose-colored washes for the Senate Building in Warsaw, Poland, by Victor Louis. Giacomo Quarenghi's interior design for the Russian czar's palace near St. Petersburg is also included.



Expansive city squares and city scapes, vast
palaces, memorial chapels, temples, mausoleums, country
homes, gazebos, breakfast tables, chandeliers and
sconces, clocks, tableware, inkstands, stage settings
and stage curtains are among the wide variety of
subjects of design included in the exhibition.

The exhibition is circulated by the Smithsonian
Institutions' Travelling Exhibition Service (SITES),
and is made possible by grants from the National
Endowment for the Arts, the de Menil Foundation and
the Ohio Arts Council.

A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the
exhibition and, like the exhibition ~~1981~~, was prepared
under the supervision of Elaine Evans Dee, Curator
of Drawings and Prints at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in
New York.